

Delaware Nutrient Management Program

DELAWARE CONSERVATION
PRACTICE STANDARD

**PRODUCTION AREA RISK
ASSESSMENT**

(Reported by No.)

DEFINITION

To assist farmers and plan writers in determining the probability of a discharge of nutrients into Waters of the State from areas where livestock are fed and raised.

PURPOSE

To minimize agricultural pollution of surface and ground water by encouraging proper location, operation, and maintenance of areas where livestock are raised. This practice is not a regulatory tool. It is designed to assist in the decision making process as to whether a farm may need to obtain a CAFO permit.

**CONDITIONS WHERE PRACTICE
APPLIES**

This practice can be applied to any farm where livestock are raised.

CONSIDERATIONS

Production Area Risk Assessment is a tool for determining the proper location, design, operation, and maintenance of animal feeding areas.

When performing a Production Area Risk Assessment consider:

1. Water quality standards and designated use limitations that exist locally or statewide in how manure is handled and stored in the production area.
2. Outside nutrient stockpiling setback distances in the production area from

environmentally sensitive areas, such as streams, water bodies, sinkholes wells, gullies, ditches, surface inlets, or rapidly permeable soil areas.

3. Time limits for any outdoor stockpiling of manure in the production area.
4. Location of any drainage conveyances that may cause storm water to be discharged into Waters of the State.
5. Determine which manure storage and handling practices (such as windrowing or extended periods between crust outs) are used.
6. Determine whether the farm has adequate covered manure storage capacity.
7. Determine how much contact the animals being raised have with waterways or storm water.

CRITERIA

Criteria Applicable to All Purposes

Production Area Risk Assessments shall take into account all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

It should include a review of the farm's nutrient management or animal waste management plan and all manure handling records.

The Production Risk Assessment should take into consideration:

1. CAFO permit status of the farm.
2. Type and number(s) of livestock raised on the farm.
3. The methods of mortality handling used on the farm.
4. The farm's manure handling and storage methods and facilities. Specifically does the farm have adequate covered storage to handle crust outs and clean outs.

5. Location of swales, ditches pipes and other drainage conveyances in the production area.
6. Proximity of the production area to any Waters of the State such as tax ditches or streams.
7. Whether the farm land-applies or exports the manure, the amount of cropland, and soil classes of any cropland.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the information obtained during the Production Area Risk Assessment, it may be possible for a farmer to determine if the farm needs a CAFO permit.

In addition any changes that need be made to the sighting, operation, maintenance or storm water handling characteristics of the production can be noted during the risk assessment.

PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS

Specifications shall be in keeping with this standard, the Delaware Nutrient Management Law and the Delaware CAFO Regulations. They shall describe the requirements for applying the practice to achieve its intended purpose and to prevent water quality impairment.

All Production Area Risk Assessments should address the sections listed in the criteria section, even by indicating they are not applicable due to the absence of cropland on the farm.

OPERATION AND MAINTAINENCE

A new risk assessment may need to be completed if there are substantial changes to the location, maintenance, or operation of the production area. These may include but are limited to:

1. An increase in the numbers of animals grown.
2. New construction of animal housing or feeding buildings.
3. A change in the type of animals grown.

4. A change in the method of mortality disposal.
5. A change in the manner of manure handling and disposal.

REFERENCES

1. Delaware Department of Agriculture. Title 3 of Delaware Code, Chapter 22 Nutrient Management
2. Delaware Department of Agriculture. Delaware Nutrient Management Notes.
3. University of Delaware, 1996. Nutrient Management Handbook.. USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service, April 1992. Agricultural Waste Management Field Handbook.
4. EPA Risk Assessment Checklist